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Biennial Report
1919-1920

Department of Immigration
Labor and Statistics



State of Idaho

O. H. BARBER
Commissioner

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December 31, 1920.

Hon. D. W. Davis,
Governor of Idaho,
Boise, Idaho.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a report of the operations of the Department of Immigration, Labor and Statistics for the period from April 14, 1919 to December 31, 1920.

Respectfully,

O. H. BARBER,
Commissioner.

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Department of Immigration, Labor
and Statistics

THE Department of Immigration, Labor and Statistics was organized April 14, 1919. Nothing of value of the old Department, which had been merged with the Farm Markets Department for two years, was found. The furniture and fixtures were dispersed and the records, if any, lost. It was necessary to begin anew. In doing so, the advise and counsel of persons long engaged in immigration work was sought, and is still being used to the fullest extent. Valuable assistance rendered by the immigration departments of the transcontinental railroads, by local commercial organizations, the Extension Service of the University of Idaho, and various county and state officials is gratefully acknowledged.

Since the Department was first established much valuable information has been gathered but failure to place it in form for preservation has resulted in the loss of most of it. The information that is now being gathered will be preserved in permanent records and will become a valuable index to the development of the State and its different units.

A financial statement is appended.

FINANCIAL REPORT
1919-1920.

	Salary	Clerk Hire	Office Expense
Appropriations.....	\$6,300.00	\$3,600.00	\$5,000.00
Expended.....	6,179.32	3,176.25	4,874.39
Balances remaining.....	\$ 120.68	\$ 423.75	\$ 125.61
Cash on hand at close of biennium.....			670.04
EXPENDITURES CLASSIFIED			
Furniture and Equipment.....			\$1,377.65
Transportation.....			721.84
Room and Meals.....			542.10
Stationery.....			330.82
Printing and Binding.....			994.55
Postage.....			272.30
Newspaper Advertising, and promotion of State and Sales.....			214.64
Maps, office supplies and sundries.....			420.49
Total Office Expense.....			\$4,874.39

NEW FOUNDATION LAID

On July 1, 1919, cooperative arrangements were established with the University Extension Service and the Bureau of Crop Estimates of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the organization and conduct of a service to be known as the Cooperative Crop Reporting Service for Idaho. Through this arrangement the assistance of the Extension Service is secured in maintaining county crop reporting committees through its county agents and county farm bureaus. The U. S. Department of Agriculture furnishes the service of one or more thoroughly competent statisticians and clerks to assist in supervising the collection, tabulation, preparation and issuance of monthly reports on the agricultural and live stock industries. The co-ordination places at the service of this Department the experience, organization and records of the Bureau of Crop Estimates, the trained staff of the University of Idaho Extension Services and the county agents and county farm bureaus. Through these combined agencies it is possible to obtain reliable information more readily and more economically than formerly. The cost of this cooperation is one clerk who assists in compiling the information that is secured by this Department and by the Bureau of Crop Estimates through its various channels. An amalgamation of the Bureau of Crop Estimates with the Department of Immigration, Labor and Statistics has virtually been secured through the occupation of joint offices and the uniting of clerical forces and equipment. The Extension Service, located in adjoining rooms, with its bulletins and its wealth of general and technical information always at command makes the cooperative arrangement ideal. It is highly desirable to retain this relation because it eliminates duplication and insures a consistent and comprehensive plan of operation no matter what changes the vicissitudes of politics may bring. The lack of such a plan in the past has resulted in much wasted effort and money and prevented the gathering and compilation of data, the lack of which is now keenly felt. Idaho is the only state in which this complete cooperation has been effected but it has been brought to the attention of other states and recommended for adoption by Mr. L. M. Estabrook, Chief of the

Bureau of Crop Estimates of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

THE GATHERING OF STATISTICS

The most important service of this Department during the biennium has been the laying of a foundation for future work in cooperation with the statistician for the Bureau of Crop Estimates and the Extension Service of the University of Idaho. The value of reliable statistics in immigration work can hardly be over estimated. Almost every inquirer for land asks for production figures, ranges of temperature and precipitation, length of growing season, facts about the live stock industry, dairying, etc. Owing to a difference of 5,000 feet or more in the altitudes of the agricultural districts of the State inquirers cannot be answered in general terms. The cooperative relations now established make it possible to give specific information collected from more than 2,900 crop reporters in every part of the State and arranged by trained statisticians. The relations which make possible the securing and compiling of this information should not be disturbed. This is a highly technical activity and requires much educational work in the training of those engaged in it. No change should be made which will interrupt the permanency or stability of this cooperation.

The Extension Service of the University of Idaho has greatly advanced this work during the past year by making it possible for the statistician of the Crop Reporting Bureau to visit many counties and instruct the crop reporters and farm bureaus in the technical work of making reports and by contributing toward the cost of printing the monthly reports. Provision should be made so that the statistician can spend at least half of his time in the field.

The assessors of the State are an important element in this cooperation in reporting the acreage devoted to the principal crops in their respective counties. Acreage multiplied by estimated yields per acre gives the total estimated production figures. There is no more important factor in securing for the producer an equitable share of the value of his products than accurate crop production reports. It is therefore important that diligent care be exercised by the assessors in gathering and re-

porting acreage statistics, and that they have proper encouragement and instruction as to the gathering of this data. An evidence of how accurate such data can be made is disclosed by comparing the number of farms reported by the 14th census with the number reported by the assessors. Several of the assessors reported almost exactly the same number of farms as the census bureau gives.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS

The publicity and advertising of some of the larger State land sales have been handled by this Department, and interest stimulated in other sales by correspondence. The result of this cooperation has been gratifying and the benefits of team work conclusively proven. Whenever the dates of sales of agricultural lands can be set sufficiently far in advance to permit of good publicity this Department can do effective work in stimulating interest in them. Many inquiries relating to the purchase of State lands are received but the sale dates are not usually set far enough in advance to permit the best use to be made of them.

INVESTIGATING LANDS INVITING SETTLEMENT

In making investigations relative to the classification on lands inviting settlement the specialists of the University of Idaho Extension Service and the county agents have given valuable assistance. They have made it possible to conduct intelligent surveys of many localities to determine the character of the lands and the chances for success of those who might enter thereon, and in some instances have been the means of avoiding mistakes. It is the policy of this Department to make such investigations before directing the attention of inquirers to new or unsettled localities.

STATE HAS SATISFACTORY GROWTH

The census gives Idaho a population of 431,826. This is an increase over 1910 of 106,232 or 32.6 per cent. The combined populations of Ada, Canyon, Gem, Payette, Washington, Adams, Valley, Boise, Owyhee, Elmore and Lincoln counties do not quite equal this gain. When it is considered that immigration was greatly interrupted during the period of the World War and that no large development projects have been

undertaken during the past decade, the growth shown is very satisfactory. The only unsatisfactory condition disclosed is the unevenness of the distribution of the gain. Of the 106,232 new people in Idaho the ten northern counties have 6,130 which is approximately the population of Lewis County. The thirty-four southern counties have gained 100,106. Their increase is approximately the present population of Bannock, Bingham, Bonneville, Caribou, Clark, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison and Teton counties. Of the increase in the southern counties, 98,884 is in the territory that was included in the thirteen Snake River counties in 1910. In other words, 93 per cent of the total increase in the population of the State has been within these counties. A further interesting fact is that the irrigated lands of the Snake River Valley and the towns supported principally by them have about 84,000 of the increase above noted. This irrigated area is estimated at 2,500,000 acres.

In 1910 the northern counties had 32.66 per cent of the State's population. They now have 26.05 per cent. The percentage of increase for the northern counties is 5.44 while the towns have increased only 2.5 per cent. Southern Idaho has 73.95 per cent of the total population, as against 67.34 in 1910. The population of southern county seat towns is 87,467 as against 51,850 for the same towns ten years ago. The population of these towns is 27.4 per cent of the population of the southern counties, as against 23.6 per cent ten years ago, showing that the towns are gaining in population faster than the rural districts.

A study of the increases in population shows the benefits of publicity. The large irrigation projects which have had production statistics and publicity have increased much more rapidly in population than irrigated districts of equal desirability which lacked production records or publicity. Many small communities which offer splendid opportunities have made practically no advancement whatever. The character of the literature issued in the past to meet the inquiries of those seeking homes may, in a large measure, be responsible for this uneven development. Our publicity has been built around the large irrigation projects, or about alfalfa, fruit, potato and sugar

beet districts, and has served rather to detract from than to benefit communities which did not have some outstanding feature to impress inquirers. The county is the unit in the data now being gathered, which makes it possible to serve the small community as well as the large one. In at least two counties immigration will be one of the projects undertaken by the farm bureaus and will be conducted in co-operation with this Department.

One might conclude from the fact that the irrigated lands of the Snake River Valley have received the greater part of the increase in population of the past ten years that other parts of the State have little to offer to invite settlement. This is far from being true. The cutover timber lands of north Idaho for example, contain some excellent agricultural lands. Their development will necessarily be slow and somewhat expensive but probably less expensive than some of the great tracts which southern Idaho hopes to bring under irrigation. In the cut over lands it is possible to make the strength and energy of those undertaking their improvement very largely take the place of money, so that men of limited means may safely purchase them. Those who are willing to undergo hard labor and a few years of privation in order to carve out homes for themselves may be assured in many of the cut over districts of having something worth while in the end. Considerable advancement is being made in the reclaiming of cut over lands and in a few years they will materially add to the wealth of the State. The State may well afford to assist in hastening their development.

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF FARMS

A recent census report gives Idaho 42,109 farms, an increase of 11,302 over 1910, or 36.7 per cent. Idaho stands third in the list of States in the percentage of increase, having 12.7 per cent of the total increase for the United States. Southern Idaho has 32,625 farms as against 21,895 in 1910, a gain of 10,733. Every county in southern Idaho shows an increase. Twin Falls County has the greatest number of farms, 2,746, also the largest increase, 1,451. Canyon County led ten years ago with 2,912 farms, but lost the lead by being divided. Bonne-

ville and Bingham counties show a gain of 1,237. Bingham County now has almost as many farms as Bingham and Bonneville combined had ten years ago.

Some North Idaho counties show gains and others losses. Bonner and Boundary Counties, (Boundary was created out of Bonner since the 13th census) have an increase of 357 farms. Kootenai and Benewah, all Kootenai in 1910, show an increase of 525, and Shoshone 28 farms. Latah shows a loss of 75, Idaho of 17 and Nez Perce, Clearwater and Lewis combined a loss of 249. There are many new farms in those counties, but the consolidations have out numbered the new ones. The net increase in the number of farms in the northern counties is 569.

SERVING INQUIRERS

An earnest effort has been made to give as near personal service to all inquirers as possible. In order to do so it is necessary to know more of the experience, environment and circumstances of inquirers than is usually disclosed in their requests. Many of the letters received leave much to be guessed at. It is difficult to tell what the "average price of good farming land" is or where it can be found unless one can know what the inquirers' ideas of good farming land are. To secure information to intelligently answer such inquiries a questionnaire has been used which secures from the inquirer an expression as to what kind of farming he is familiar with or interested in, whether he wants irrigated or non-irrigated land, the kind of crops he desires to produce, the amount of land desired, the amount of money he wishes to invest, whether his experience has been in humid regions or in irrigated or dry farming districts, average precipitation where he has been farming, ranges of temperature, and whether or not similar climatic conditions will be satisfactory; whether or not he has had experience in clearing timber lands; whether he will require employment to supplement his finances; what special training, if any, he has had; number of children, if any, requiring school facilities, and other details necessary to intelligent service. Having this information it is only necessary to be acquainted with the varying conditions found in the State to know where such an inquirer will fit.

Literature from such localities as most nearly meet his specifications is then supplied and the name and address of the inquirer furnished to commercial clubs, real estate men and other interested parties. The service of county agents and extension workers has been freely used in an effort to satisfactorily meet inquiries which call for special information. More than three thousand earnest homeseekers have had from one to several letters from this Department in addition to letters from those to whom their names were referred. Many idle inquiries are received, but the questionnaire readily separates them from the ones that are genuine.

APPROPRIATIONS

There was appropriated for this Department for the past biennium \$14,600, of which \$5,000 was for general office expense. Unexpended balances are \$670.04. The Department has received many expressions of regret that the appropriation was not larger. But in the light of experience the limiting of the appropriation was wise. It has compelled a more careful study of the problems connected with immigration than would otherwise have been made, and the adoption of a policy looking to an established program and permanent records. Had ample funds been available at the beginning of the term much of them would probably have been wasted in ill-advised publicity. Experience has suggested other methods than were then believed to be best. Of the amount appropriated for office expense more than half has been required for equipment and travel expenses. Nothing can take the place of travel in becoming familiar with the resources, industries, needs and opportunities of the different counties and localities, which is necessary to intelligently serve them; nor of the benefits of personal contact with those who are seeking in their private capacities to promote the development of their respective communities.

More money has been asked for the coming biennium than was appropriated by the last session. The cooperative arrangement with the Bureau of Crop Estimates has required the services of a clerk only part of the time during the past biennium

but in future the services of a clerk all the time will be required. More money will be required for printing and literature. Within a few months quite comprehensive census figures will be available, which together with the data being compiled by this Department and the Idaho Crop Reporting Service, will make possible the issuance of useful literature. No literature of any moment has been issued since 1912, and the supply has long since been exhausted. For the past biennium the Department has very largely had to rely upon the progressive chambers of commerce of the State for literature with which to meet inquiries.

LEGISLATION

No legislation is required by this Department except it be the transfer from other departments of some activities closely associated with production estimates. The licensing of threshermen, a function of the Department of Agriculture provided for in Section 2042, Compiled Statutes, and production reports of dairies, creameries and cheese factories, now required to be made to the Department of Public Welfare, are two such possible transfers.

Nearly identical inspection duties are imposed upon this Department and upon the Industrial Accident Board. Due to lack of a sufficient appropriation the inspection service contemplated for this Department has never been organized.

